

Claim 1 (currently amended): A gaming device comprising:

- a plurality of reels;
- a plurality of symbols on the reels;
- a triggering event associated with at least one of said symbols or a combination of said symbols occurring on said reels;
- a plurality of free spins of the reels;
- a plurality of multipliers associated with the free spins of the reels; and
- a processor programmed to control the reels, whereupon after the triggering event occurs on the reels, the processor is programmed to:
 - (i) provide said free spins of the reels to a player,
 - (ii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player for each free spin based upon the symbols occurring on the reels from said free spin and based on one of the multipliers picked from the plurality of multipliers,
 - (iii) pick at least a first one of the multipliers and a second different one of the multipliers during said plurality of free spins of the reels, and
 - (iv) determine a value of said second different multiplier (a) based on a value of said first multiplier being previously picked (b) independently of said symbols or said combination of said symbols occurring on said reels, and (c) regardless of whether an award was paid to the player in a previous free spin.

Claim 2 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of free spins are predetermined.

Claim 3 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of free spins is randomly determined by the processor.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of free spins is determined in a sub-game provided to the player by the processor.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of free spins is determined by the player by selecting at least one of a plurality of masked selections controlled by the processor.

Claim 6 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes additional free spins provided to the player based on the occurrence of one or more symbols on the reels.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein for each free spin of the reels after a first one of the free spins of the reels, the multiplier picked is greater than the multiplier associated with one of the free spins of the reels that precedes said free spin of the reels.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the multiplier picked for each sequential free spin of the reels increases by a predetermined amount.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 8, wherein the multiplier picked for each sequential free spin of the reels increases by an amount selected from a range greater than zero and less than ten after each free spin of the reels.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the multiplier picked for each sequential free spin of the reels increases by a random amount.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the multiplier picked for one of the free spins of the reels increases by a random amount after a plurality of free spins of the reels.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the multiplier picked for each free spin of the reels increases by a randomly determined amount after a predetermined number of said free spins of the reels.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the multiplier picked for each free spin of the reels increases by a randomly determined amount after a randomly determined number of said free spins of the reels.

Claims 14 to 16 (canceled)

Claim 17 (currently amended): A gaming device comprising:

a plurality of reels;

a plurality of symbols on the reels;

a triggering event associated with at least one of said symbols or combination of said symbols occurring on said reels;

a bonus round including a plurality of free spins of the reels;

a plurality of multipliers associated with the free spins of the reels, ~~wherein the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels after a first free spin of the reels is greater than the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels that precedes each free spin of the reels in each play of the bonus round; and~~

a processor programmed to control the reels, whereupon after the triggering event occurs on the reels, the processor is programmed to:

(i) provide the bonus round including said free spins of the reels to a player,

(ii) increase the multiplier for each free spin of the reels, and

~~(ii)~~ (iii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player for each free spin based on the symbols occurring on the reels from the free spin and the multiplier associated with said free spin of the reels.

Claim 18 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, which includes a consolation award provided to the player when the player does not receive an award for at least one of the free spins of the reels.

Claim 19 (original): The gaming device of Claim 18, wherein the consolation award is predetermined.

Claim 20 (original): The gaming device of Claim 18, wherein the consolation award is randomly determined.

Claim 21 (original): The gaming device of Claim 18, wherein the consolation award is based on the multiplier associated with said free spins of the reels from which the player does not receive an award.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the number of free spins is predetermined.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the number of free spins is randomly determined.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the number of free spins is determined in a sub-game provided to the player by the processor.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the number of free spins is determined by the player by selecting at least one of a plurality of masked selections controlled by the processor.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein said multiplier associated with each sequential free spin of the reels increases by a predetermined amount.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 26, wherein said multiplier associated with each sequential free spin of the reels increases by an amount selected from a range greater than zero and less than ten.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein said multiplier associated with each sequential free spin of the reels increases by a randomly determined amount.

Claim 29 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels increases by a randomly determined amount after each predetermined number of said free spins of the reels.

Claim 30 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels increases by a randomly determined amount after a randomly determined number of said free spins of the reels.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A gaming device comprising:

- a plurality of primary reels having primary symbols displayed to a player in a primary game;

- a triggering event associated with at least one of said primary symbols or combination of said primary symbols occurring on said primary reels as a result of spinning the primary reels in the primary game, wherein said triggering event triggers a secondary game;

- a plurality of secondary reels having secondary symbols displayed to the player in the secondary game;

- at least one incrementor symbol included in the secondary symbols;

- a plurality of free spins of the secondary reels provided to a player in the secondary game;

- a plurality of multipliers associated with the free spins of the secondary reels in the secondary game; and

- a processor programmed to:

- (i) control the secondary reels,

(ii) increase the multiplier associated with each subsequent free spin of the secondary reels when each time one or more of the incrementor symbols occurs on the secondary reels in the free spins, and

(iii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player for each free spin of the secondary reels based upon the secondary symbols occurring on the secondary reels and the multiplier associated with the free spin of the secondary reels.

Claim 32 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, which includes an accumulated award based on the awards provided to a player in the secondary game wherein the accumulated award is provided to the player after there are no free spins remaining in the secondary game.

Claim 33 (original): The gaming device of Claim 32, wherein the accumulated award includes a plurality of the awards provided to the player in the secondary game.

Claim 34 (original): The gaming device of Claim 32, wherein the accumulated award includes all of the awards provided to the player in the secondary game.

Claim 35 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, wherein each incrementor symbol increments the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels by a predetermined amount.

Claim 36 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, wherein each incrementor symbol increments the multiplier associated with each free spin of the reels by a random amount.

Claim 37 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, wherein said multiplier increases based on the number of said incrementor symbols that occur in a free spin of the reels.

Claim 38 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, a probability of occurring on the reels in a free spin is associated with each incrementor symbol, and wherein one incrementor symbol has a higher probability than another incrementor symbol.

Claims 39 to 51 (canceled)

Claim 52 (previously presented): A gaming device comprising:

- a primary game including at least one triggering event;

- a secondary game which includes a plurality of symbols, a plurality of reel events employing said symbols and a different multiplier associated with each reel event; and

- a processor programmed to control the primary game and the secondary game, whereupon after the triggering event occurs in the primary game, the processor is programmed to:

- (i) provide the secondary game to a player, and

(ii) for each and every reel event, increase the multiplier after said reel event for every subsequent reel event, and

(iii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player for each reel event in the secondary game based upon the occurrence of the symbols in said reel event in the secondary game and the multiplier associated with said reel event.

Claim 53 (currently amended): A method for operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) initiating a bonus game;
- (b) displaying a plurality of reels having a plurality of symbols;
- (c) determining a number of free spins of the reels;
- (d) spinning the plurality of reels;
- (e) determining whether to provide an award to a player based on said symbols ~~on the~~ displayed as a result of the spinning reels;
- (f) modifying said award, if any, using a multiplier;
- (g) providing said award to the player;
- (h) increasing the multiplier after each free spin in each play of the bonus game for each subsequent free spin; and
- (i) repeating steps (d) to (h) until there are no free spins remaining.

Claim 54 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein said multiplier increases by a predetermined amount after each free spin.

Claim 55 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein said multiplier increases by a random amount after each free spin.

Claim 56 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein said multiplier increases by a predetermined amount after a plurality of free spins.

Claim 57 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein said multiplier increases by a random amount after a random number of free spins.

Claim 58 (currently amended): A method for operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) initiating a bonus game;
- (b) displaying a plurality of reels having a plurality of symbols;
- (c) determining a number of free spins of the reels;
- (d) spinning the plurality of reels;
- (e) determining whether to provide an award to a player based on said symbols on the reels displayed as a result of the spinning of the reels;
- ~~(f) determining whether an incrementor symbol appears on said reels;~~
- ~~(g) (f) upon each spinning of the reels increasing a multiplier if the incrementor~~

symbol appears on said reels;

~~(h)~~ (g) modifying the award using said multiplier; and

~~(i)~~ (h) repeating steps (d) to ~~(h)~~ (g) until there are no free spins remaining.

Claim 59 (previously presented): The method of Claim 58, wherein each incrementor symbol increases the multiplier by a predetermined amount.

Claim 60 (previously presented): The method of Claim 58, wherein each incrementor symbol increases the multiplier by a random amount.

Claim 61 (currently amended): A gaming device comprising:

a plurality of reels;

a plurality of symbols on the reels;

a triggering event associated with at least one of said symbols or a combination of said symbols occurring on said reels;

a plurality of free spins of the reels;

a plurality of multipliers associated with the free spins of the reels; and

a processor programmed to control the reels, whereupon the occurrence of the triggering event on the reels, the processor is programmed to:

(i) provide said free spins of the reels to a player,

(ii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player for each free spin based on the symbols occurring on the reels from said free spin and a picked one of the

multipliers associated with said free spin,

(iii) pick at least a first one of multipliers and a second different one of the multipliers during said plurality of free spins of the reels, and

(iv) determine a value of said second different multiplier (a) based on a value of said first multiplier being previously picked (b) independently of said symbols occurring on said reels, and (c) regardless of whether an award was paid to the player in a previous free spin.

Claim 62 (currently amended): A gaming device comprising:

- a base game including a plurality of base reels;
- a plurality of base symbols included on the base reels;
- a triggering event associated with at least one of said base symbols or a combination of said base symbols occurring on said base reels wherein the triggering event triggers a bonus game;
- a bonus game including a plurality of bonus reels;
- a plurality of bonus symbols included on the bonus reels wherein the bonus symbols are different from the base symbols;
- a plurality of free spins of the bonus reels;
- a plurality of multipliers associated with the free spins of the bonus reels; and
- a processor programmed to control the base and bonus reels, whereupon the occurrence of the triggering event on the base reels, the processor is programmed to:
 - (i) initiate the bonus game,
 - (ii) provide said free spins of the bonus reels to a player,
 - (iii) determine an award, if any, to provide to the player based upon the bonus symbols occurring on the bonus reels after each free spin and the multiplier associated with each free spin, and
 - (iv) change a value of the multiplier to a predetermined amount at least once during the free spins of the bonus reels (a) based on a value of the previous multiplier (b) independently of said symbols occurring on said reels, and (c) regardless of whether an award was paid to the player in a previous free spin.